



**The Holy Prophet Jonas
Whom the Holy Church Celebrates on September 21.**

The Prophet Jonas, the son of Amathi, of the town of Geth-hoper (IV Kings 14:25), was of the tribe of Zabulon: he prophesied during the years 838-810 before Christ. God commanded him to go to Nineveh, the great city of the Assyrians, and to proclaim its destruction was nigh at hand because of the sins of its people. But he, as a Prophet who knew the great compassion of God feared that at his preaching the Ninevites would repent; that God, accepting their repentance in His love for man, would not fulfil Jonas' threats; and that he would be branded a false prophet. So he disobeyed the divine command, and boarded a ship and departed elsewhere. Yet, the sudden and fearful sea-storm and the revelation of Jonas' disobedience caused the sailors to cast him into the sea. A great sea monster appeared straightway by divine providence and swallowed him up. For three days and three nights he was found in its belly and he prayed, saying the words, "I cried aloud in mine affliction unto the Lord my God..." (Jonas 2:3 Sixth Ode of the Holy Psalter). The sea-monster then vomited him up on dry land and he again heard God's command. Wherefore, he went and preached, saying, "In three days, Nineveh shall be destroyed." The people became terrified and all repented. The great, the small, babes at the breast, and even the irrational beasts fasted, and thus, having found mercy from God, they were spared His wrath. Jonas' book of prophecy is divided into four chapters, and is placed fifth in order among the twelve minor Prophets. His three-day

sojourn in the sea-monster's belly is an image of our Saviour's three-day burial and His life-bringing resurrection (Matt. 12:39-40). His name means "dove."

On this day we celebrate the Apodosis of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Life-creating Cross, and the service for September 14 is changes as set forth in the Typicon. The services to the Prophet and the Apostle are chanted on the 22nd of the month.

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*Dismissal Hymn of the Prophet
Third Tone. Thy confession*

TO the Ninevites, thou wast a trumpet, * blaring fearful threats of Heaven's judgments, * at the which they repented with all their hearts; * and from the sea-monster's belly didst thou foreshow * the Lord's divine Resurrection to all the world. * Hence, entreat Him to bring out of corruption all of us, * who honor thee, O Jonas, as a friend of God.

Kontakion of the Prophet. Third Tone

THOU didst pass three days and nights * within the sea-monster's entrails, * showing forth the Lord's descent * into the belly of Hades; * for when he freely suffered * His saving Passion, * He arose out of the sepulchre on the third day. * Hence, we honour thee, O Prophet, * who wast deemed worthy * to be a figure of Christ.

